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WHAT'S WHAT WITHIN

Storms and sicknesses...announcements and analyses...meetings passed and planned...and the usual extras make up this issue. There's even a job opening announcement, after a drouth of several weeks. Keep reading....

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DEPENDS ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT...

GPA's Jim Webster and Hal Taylor discussed information programs before the Senate appropriations committee last week. Reception was good but one question prompted a search for an answer and might interest readers of "Inside...."

Question had to do with how many inf people USDA had compared to other cabinet level departments. We thought you'd be interested in the answer...which came from materials published by the Office of Personnel Management and was based on employment Oct. 31, 1978.

Agriculture had 994 full-time inf employees, in all parts of the country. Larger numbers were in the various units of the Department of Defense (Army, 4,789; Navy, 2,506; Air Force, 2,272); in the Department of Interior with 1,026, and the International Communication Agency with 2,252. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare was just under USDA with 988 people. Commerce had 495; Transportation, 309; Veterans Administration, 508; Labor, 185; State, 220; Energy, 281; EPA, 236; and NASA, 350. (Defense personnel were all civilians, by the way.)

The occupations included editors and writers, public inf officers and specialists, technical writers, photographers, designers, illustrators--those in what we feds call the "1000" series of classification.

Another interesting fact we noted, but which wasn't requested for the hearing, was that only 1.3% of the government's supergrades are in inf jobs. In GPA's reorganization, the new senior executive positions being requested will amount to only 1/2 of 1% of such positions in USDA.

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ON GLOOM AND DOOM!

In another gee-whiz experience during the week, we ran across a booklet--apparently a newsletter--called the "Natural Hazards Observer." It's published by the Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, Institute of Behavioral Science, U. of Colorado, Boulder, 80309.

We were attracted to a brief article by Ev Rogers of Stanford U. He was reporting on the role played by mass media in natural disasters. Despite the fact that many relief leaders regard media reps as troublesome, he said, actually their reports are important to the agencies themselves and to the public. Ev remarked that in a "rapid-onset disaster," the mass media can play an important role in providing warnings to people living in an area...but data gathered in a Caribbean Island nation shortly after a hurricane hit it in mid-1979 showed that few people understood the difference between a "warning" and a "watch," nor did people understand that the hurricane would begin to affect the island several hours before the hurricane eye hit the area.

Then another item caught our attention...statements about findings concerning the New Madrid (Mo.) earthquake zone. Seems that if there's a new earthquake there as intense as the quakes of 1811-12, structural damage would range from \$2.3 to \$2.5 billion...death toll would be 200-300 persons.

If these kinds of items intrigue you, probably you can get on the newsletter's mailing list by writing Boulder--see address given earlier.

WHO'S BUYING WHAT

Speaking of interesting items...have you noted the weekly sheet issued by the Foreign Agricultural Service called "Export Briefs"?

It's a rundown of trade items gathered from our attaches over the world noting buyers who want to trade for various ag commodities. For instance, if your home wine hobby is cramped for space, you can find out who's buying wines around the world. Well...probably you won't get rid of your home brew...or whatever...but some of your economists and others might find the sheet useful.

To receive the report, get in touch with the Export Trade Services Division, FAS, USDA, Room 4945 South Bldg., Washington 20250.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR SPRING

Last year we moaned about D.C.'s weather...this year we hear from everywhere about rough spring storms...two feet of snow in Nebraska and Montana...heavy rains in the South...more storms coming to the Rockies. As we think about those, we also think about some of our colleagues who've been under the weather lately.

For instance, Ace Tyler of Purdue called last week to tell us that Ed Ferringer had to enter the hospital again--we believe this is his third trip--with his ailing heart. This attack was a "mild" one.

Then for the past couple of weeks, Ed Goodpaster of GPA has been hospitalized with pneumonia...and slowly seems on the mend now. Also in GPA, David Sutton has had minor surgery and is barely able to hang about the office for half days at a time. Flu bugs here have nailed more people than we dare mention, too, for fear of omitting someone. (Hurry up, Spring!)

ENERGY-HO!

We've pitched the word "bio-energy" to you before. It's a way of talking about the complexities of old and new techniques to get clean energy and key byproducts from plant matter.

On April 21-24, in Atlanta, there'll be an explosion of activity about the subject during the Bio-Energy World Congress and Exposition. If you want more details about the conference, contact Peter Schauffler or Thomas Burnard, the Bio-Energy Council, 1625 Eye St., N.W., Washington, (202) 833-5656. For exposition information, contact David Lindsay, Exposition Coordinator, Bio-Energy Headquarters, P.O. Box 17413, Washington (703) 471-5761.

NOW THERE'S "FARMLINE" By now maybe you've seen Vol. 1, No. 1 of the new "Farmline" magazine published by the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service. Ben Blankenship says it replaces two long-published periodicals..."Agricultural Situation" and "Farm Index."

"Farmline" is different from its predecessors. It includes two-color charts, for example, to give quick, visual summaries of trends and developments. Nicest thing we noticed was the use of a dull finish paper...now we can read without worrying about glare.

Daniel Williamson is exec. editor; Eric Van Chantfort is managing editor.

VISIT D.C. NEXT FALL

For 22 years, the U.S. Govt. Printing Office has offered a seminar called "editorial planning for printing production." The program is held quarterly (March, June, September, December) for 3-1/2 days. It's always been open to local and out-of-town federal agencies and would like to encourage enrollment. Nominations have to be made through an agency's training or personnel office by submitting a training form or a letter to the Superintendent of Typography and Design, Room C-846, GPO, Washington 20401, no later than the closing date of Sept. 5. (Telephone reservations are not acceptable.)

Applicants will be accepted in the order in which they are received, and notice of acceptance will be given a week before the start of the program. The course is limited to writers, editors and administrators from GS-5 and above. GPO requests that if you have to cancel after being accepted, please let them know so someone on the waiting list can attend.

WELL, BULLY!

Stan Prochaska, GPA, flags to our attention that according to the National Market News Association's newsletter, "Communicator," the annual conference workshop will be held in St. Louis June 6-7. This will be the largest gathering of federal and state market news officials in the history of the program. It will be the first joint conference for all market news commodity groups.

LANGUAGE FOR MEDIA

On Friday, April 11...6 p.m....local designers will meet at the Smithsonian Discovery Theater, Arts and Industries Bldg., for a Federal Design Council program on concepts behind key words, phrases and images for TV commercials. Guest speaker will be Jim Pappas, a copy writer, actor and producer from New York where he's principal consultant to Sheridan-Elson Communications.

HISTORIC FmHA NOTES

You history buffs can get copies of "A Brief History of Farmers Home Administration," if you'll check with Stan Weston or others in the FmHA information office. In addition to background information about the origins of the agency, there's dope about program lending through 1979, legislative activity and descriptions of current programs.

WHAT WAS THAT?

When Larry Quinn, GPA, spoke to the 17th Ag Communicators Conference at the U. of Missouri on March 20, one of his opening lines was "the greatest misconception surrounding communication is the illusion that it has been achieved."

We thought that was pretty good, so we read the rest of his speech. Along toward the end, we found this wise counsel: "Give your information the acid test. Would you watch or listen to your message--if you didn't have to?" (Okay, let's answer honestly, folks!)

AUBURN U. VISUAL HUNT

From Auburn U. comes word of a job hunt for an extension program associate--visual design. Person hired will plan and "execute the production and visual interpretation of all materials submitted to publications, art and visuals staff group."

Job specs require a B.A. in visual design with "substantial design ability and understanding of printing and graphic production." Commercial art and production experience is desired...plus knowledge of the use of visual equipment and an understanding of the preparation of materials for such use. Knowledge of and aptitude for journalism and ability to adjust visual materials to a diverse clientele also is desired.

If interested, get in touch with the Coordinator-Publications, Art and Visuals--Elbert Williams at (205) 826-4972.

